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UNCLAS PRETORIA 004322

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SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA: DE BEERS DIAMOND TECHNOLOGY FINDS  
MEDICAL USE

1. (U) Summary: De Beers, the world's largest producer of diamonds, has developed a fast x-ray scanner for diamond detection and analysis that also has useful application in the medical field. The Digital X-ray machine, called the Statscan, costs about \$500,000 and can perform a full-body x-ray in about 13 seconds -- compared to 45 minutes for a series of conventional x-rays. Moreover, the Statscan delivers a 75% less x-ray dosage than conventional x-ray machines. Quick scanning and low dosage help to allay patient fears and makes x-raying safer. It is particularly useful in trauma situations. End Summary

2. (U) De Beers' developed the original version of the Statscan to detect stolen diamonds hidden on mineworkers and other employees. De Beers needed a machine that was fast and safe for everyday use and came up with the Statscan. Soon it was apparent that the Statscan also had applications in the medical field. The Industrial Development Corporation (the IDC, a government financing agency) agreed to co-fund development of the first medical version. Together, DeBeers and the IDC created Lodox Systems to develop and market the Statscan.

3. (U) The first Statscan systems were installed in South Africa at the Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town and the Milpark Hospital in Johannesburg. Subsequently, one of the world's busiest trauma centers, the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore, installed a system. Lodox has now established a full subsidiary in the United States and has sold seven systems to new prototype emergency rooms designed after the September 11th terrorist attacks.

FRAZER